



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS

**The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of
Homeland Security and Emergency Management**
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Members of the Central New Hampshire Special Operations Unit cover the removal of a wounded victim during a full functional exercise at the N.H. National Guard facility in Concord on May 16.

N.H. Department of Safety photo

REGIONAL SPECIAL OPS UNITS CONDUCT EXERCISES – Two regional Special Operations Units conducted full functional exercises during May to test their response capabilities and the abilities of a number of agencies to work together under unified command. Both involved active shooter scenarios. The Belknap Special Operations Group responded on May 14 to Laconia Middle School, where armed subjects began shooting at students and adults. The Central New Hampshire Special Operations Unit responded on May 16 to the N.H. National Guard base in Concord, where terrorists attacked military personnel, took hostages and demanded to speak with the general in charge.

Both simulated incidents required a coordinated, multi-agency response to control the situation, treat victims and kill or capture the intruders.

NOAA PREDICTS ABOVE-NORMAL ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON – The Atlantic Hurricane Season begins June 1 and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration is predicting above-average storm activity this year. NOAA's Climate Prediction Center forecasts 12 to 18 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher), six to 10 of which could become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher). Of those predicted hurricanes, three to six will be Category 3, 4 or 5 (winds of 111 mph or higher). That compares with averages of 11 named storms, six hurricanes and two major hurricanes.

During a conference call with governors and other state officials on May 20, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate expressed concern that the public may be complacent about hurricanes because few in recent years have affected North America. But he said other recent disasters, such as tornadoes and floods, have improved state and local response capabilities. The Atlantic Hurricane Season continues through Nov. 30, but the greatest hurricane danger to New England is mid-August through September. This week (May 22-28) is Hurricane Preparedness Week.

VY EXERCISE CYCLE COMPLETED – Utility, state and local emergency personnel completed this year's graded exercise cycle for the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant on May 3 and 4 with plume and ingestion pathway exercises. The plume pathway scenario covered the 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone. The ingestion pathway, which covered a 50-mile EPZ, included developing limited re-entry and recovery plans. There are 540 procedures and plans involved in the VY response. Federal officials reported no major problems with the exercise. A final report is due out within a few weeks.

HOSPITALS GET HIGH MARKS FOR PREPAREDNESS - The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has released a state-by-state report identifying advances states have made in preparing hospitals for all types of disasters. The report also outlines the next steps the National Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) will take to boost community resilience. According to the report, of the more than 6,300 hospitals across the nation, more than 85 percent take advantage of the HPP. In New Hampshire, all acute care and specialty hospitals participate. Hospitals meeting the performance measures have "dedicated redundant, interoperable systems in place to communicate between hospitals, public health agencies and emergency managers," according to HHS. They also have plans to handle a surge in patient demand during a disaster, plans for hospital evacuation, sheltering patients and staff in place during a disaster and for responding to mass fatalities.

New Hampshire's Hospital Emergency Preparedness group, which includes emergency department directors, physicians, nurses, emergency medical service coordinators, infection control practitioners, emergency preparedness coordinators and the N.H. Hospital Association, was highlighted as a major reason for New Hampshire hospitals' advances in meeting the state's emergency response needs.

N.H. VOLUNTEERS ASSIST RED CROSS DISASTER OPERATIONS – Seven American Red Cross volunteers from New Hampshire are assisting response operations in the South and other areas struck by recent tornadoes and the flooding of the Mississippi River. According to Red Cross spokeswoman Becky Field, the New Hampshire volunteers are: Harry Brown from Stewartstown, who is working with Red Cross health services, and Paula Ferguson from North Swanzey who is doing disaster assessment, both in Alabama; Nancy Brown-McKinney from Deerfield, who is in northern Mississippi as part of a health services team; Judith Sloan and Roswitha Hadasch, both from Keene, who are in Tennessee working on disaster services technology and health services, respectively; Mike McKay from Farmington, is working in heavily flooded areas of New York State on mass care and Bob Scheifele from Nashua, who has been on assignment with the Red Cross for a month as a chief for mass care in Louisiana and other states. There are more than 2,800 Red Cross volunteers from around the country working in disaster zones.

DISASTER SURVIVAL FOR BUSINESSES SET – The N.H. Division of Economic Development and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development have scheduled a series of half-day workshops in June aimed at helping New Hampshire business owners survive major disasters. Disasters can damage facilities, destroy records and disrupt supply chains and businesses need Continuity of Operations plans to help them survive. Workshops will be held in each of the 10 counties, beginning on June 2 at White Mountains Community College in Berlin. For more information or to register, go to: <http://bit.ly/NHDisaster2011>.

SWEDISH PIOS VISIT HSEM – Five public information officers from the equivalent of state governments in Sweden visited the N.H. Incident Planning and Operations Center on May 5 for a tour of the facility and discussions with their counterparts in New Hampshire. The visit, which was arranged by the Swedish Embassy in Washington, included discussions with PIOs from Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the departments of Health and Human Services and Corrections. They discussed promoting public safety and the use of social media, among other issues.

REGISTER FOR N.H. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CONFERENCE – The seventh annual New Hampshire Emergency Preparedness Conference will be held Thursday, June 16, at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester. There is no charge, but pre-registration is required. For more information, or to register online, go to www.NHEmergencyPrepConference.com. The conference is presented by the N.H. departments of Health and Human Services and Safety, N.H. Health Officers Association, N.H. Hospital Association, VolunteerNH, N.H. Public Health Network, American Red Cross, and Community Health Institute.

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